



FOOD SAFETY FACT SHEET

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Boil Water Advisory

Q. What is a boil water advisory?

A. In the United States, our drinking water supply is normally safe. Yet diseases that spread through water remain a very real problem. If something has happened that could allow the water supply to become contaminated, a boil water advisory may be issued. There are a variety of reasons for such an advisory. For instance, there may have been a water line break, flooding, or intentional or unintentional contamination of the water supply.

When a boil water advisory is issued, the following precautions should be taken:

- Boil water vigorously for 1 minute before using it. Boiling it longer than 3 minutes may adversely affect water quality and taste.
- Use only bottled or boiled water for drinking, diluting fruit juices, and all other food preparation.
- For prolonged boil water advisory use only approved potable water source.
- Dispose of ice cubes, and do not use ice from an automatic icemaker. Remake ice cubes with water that has been boiled, or purchase bagged ice from an area not under advisory. Flush the icemaker water line after the advisory is lifted.
- Disinfect dishes and other food contact surfaces by immersing them for at least 1 minute in clean tap water that contains 1 teaspoon of unscented household bleach per gallon of water.
- Stop using fountain pop machines connected to a contaminated public water supply.